



The

BRITISH LUTHERAN

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"I Kiss Your Hands"

December 1958 Vol.III, No.12

INFORMATION, ARTICLES, ANNOUNCEMENTS

Issued by

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH OF ENGLAND

Thomas Bilney

In the library of Corpus Christi College in Cambridge is preserved a Bible in which the passage (Isaiah 43) is marked: "when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned". This is the Bible of Thomas Bilney, burnt at Norwich in 1531.

History has hardly done justice to "little Bilney", the gentle and unassuming Norfolk parson whom some call "the father of the English Reformation".

Born in 1495, he went up to Cambridge at an early age. Like Luther, he had been intended for the law but gave it up for the church; like Luther, whose name was yet unknown in England, he sought in vain for peace in fasting and mortification. He found it in Erasmus' New Testament in I Tim.1: "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief and principal". "After this", Bilney said, "the Scripture began to be more pleasant to me than the honey or the honeycomb".

Bilney became "the Reformer of the Reformers" at Cambridge. His timid and retiring nature held him back from public espousal of the Gospel. But, one by one, he drew future leaders of the Reformation aside, and when they were quite alone, spoke gently and persuasively of the life and hope he had found in the Gospel. Robert Barnes and Hugh Latimer were his converts and close friends. At the White Horse Inn, rendezvous for Lutherans in Cambridge, Bilney sought out and won many others for reform. When Wolsey transferred selected Cambridge students to his new College at Oxford, among them were followers of Bilney who then introduced Lutheran principles into this second centre of learning.

In 1527, Thomas Bilney was arrested for heresy, but recanted. Brokenhearted that he had betrayed the cause of Christ and inconsolable, Bilney, one evening in 1531, left Cambridge saying: "I must needs go up to Jerusalem". After a short trial, he was condemned and on 19 August, 1531 burnt at the Lollard's Pit in Norfolk.

The Apostles' Creed

Every Sunday we declare our belief in the Triune God, generally in the words of the Apostles' Creed. This is the primary creed of the Western Church, confessed by Roman Catholics, Protestants, and Lutherans alike. How did it originate?

A fourth-century tradition says that the twelve apostles, before leaving Jerusalem for their respective missionary fields, met and composed the Apostles' Creed, each in succession contributing a part, beginning with Peter, ending with Matthias.

Actually, however, the exact text of the Creed as we use it today does not appear until 750. One of its earliest forms, the Old Roman Creed of the second century, read: "I believe in God the Father Almighty, and in Christ Jesus His Son our Lord, and in Holy Spirit, Holy Church, and resurrection of the flesh".

One of the reasons why it is difficult to trace the origin of the Apostles' Creed is that, like all early creeds, it was not allowed to be written down. It was a secret, withheld from catechumens almost until the day of their admission into the church and then professed publicly in the presence of the faithful. It became the symbolum, the test and watchword, such as were used then among the soldiers of a garrison to recognize their comrades and to detect intruders. In persecution, it was the sign by which Christians recognized each other.

The recitation of the Apostles' Creed as a liturgical act in the public service began in 488 when the Patriarch of Antioch directed that it should be recited at every gathering of the congregation. We use it today, as originally, at Baptism and Confirmation, and on all Sundays except festivals and when Holy Communion is celebrated.

"Small in the number of words, but great in the importance of its ideas", St. Augustine said.

GRINGO



Guatemala and El Salvador are two of the tiny Central American republics which are the "Adam's apple" of the long neck connecting North and South America.

To Guatemala last year went St. Louis Seminarian Leonard Stahlke, out to do his year's "internship" in the practical ministry before returning to the Seminary to finish his training.

At Guatemala City he was asked to go on to Pasaguina, El Salvador, to assist Don Cirio Mijia, a Lutheran layworker.

Five Hours by Mule

In El Salvador - which means "the Saviour" - few know who the Saviour is and what He saved them from. To tell the people about their Saviour, Don Cirio and his assistant, "Don Leonardo", visited every village and farm in the hill country. It was a five-hour mule ride from one end of the parish to the other.

Riding out from Pasaguina, one on a horse, the other on a mule, the two missionaries divided the territory. And that's where another stiff test began, in addition to the language - the loneliness.

He found himself to be a curio. Most of the hill people had never seen a "gringo". He was the lone white man among the Spanish Indians. Not a person who could understand English to talk to - for a year. He hung his hammock wherever he ended the day, sometimes under someone's roof, sometimes under the trees.

"Tortillas"

Another exaction was the food. He learned to live on black beans and tortillas (flat cakes of corn flour). No water was drinkable. He drank cocoanut milk.

There were compensations. One was the country's natural beauty. The Southern Cross, in the clearest night sky he had ever seen, was a magnificent reminder of the reason he had come to El Salvador, the country of "the Saviour". He liked the moonlit mountains and the palm trees. A volcano furnished gorgeous red fireworks every eight minutes.

He did well. In a few weeks he could follow group conversation, then rapid-fire announcers on the radio. He was preaching almost immediately - with a few corrections by Don Ciro of the grammar in his sermons.

"Mestizos"

The surprise came when he learned the poor mestizos had to be persuaded they were good enough to own a Saviour. They were model "hearers of the Word", dropped their work, eagerly called in neighbours. One service in a farm home became a chain as late arrivals gave him his chance to repeat "the Saviour's story".

The high point of the year was the Christmas service. The mestizos do celebrate the day, but why - not one could tell. What a thrill for the young preacher to tell the most wonderful story in history - to men who's never heard it before!

From "Your Missions Around the World"

KENTISH TOWN Elders recommend dropping of weekly Bible study at church in favour of bi-weekly Bible study groups meeting in private homes in three different areas: Chiswick, Kentish Town, and East Finchley ... it is hoped that this will multiply present low attendance ... Chiswick group has already been in operation for several months under the capable lay-leader, George Lawton ... despite persistent December fog midweek Advent services attended by an average 25 ... Voters' Assembly, 27 November, transferred Mr. and Mrs. V. Graf to Grace Lutheran Church in Tulsa, Oklahoma, discussed CEF and Bible Class attendance, and decided to re-decorate the hall and re-surface the church grounds ... Miss Tina Lawton, formerly stage manager at Cambridge Arts Theatre, will help direct the children's Christmas tableau, "O Radiant Night" ... portions of "The Messiah" will be sung at the Christmas Day service ... Luther League Christmas party at parsonage on 28 December.

RUISLIP A "Lutheran Agencies Evening", sponsored by the Senior Youth Club, gave Mr. Eric Smith, Agencies Manager, the opportunity to devote sixty minutes in describing how by radio, film, books, and publicity, his department of the church serves to build the Kingdom of God ... the evening ended with the cartoon sound filmstrip, "The Sad Church - The Glad Church" ... any other offers for Mr. Smith? ... £16 offering for ELCE on Home Missions Sunday, the First in Advent ... CEF Savings Stamps awarded as prizes to winners of Junior Youth "Christmas Table Decorations" contest ... Christmas Events: 1) Sunday, 21 December: the Children's Christmas Service at 4 p.m., using the filmstrip "Blessings of the Christ Child"; 2) the Family Carol Service at 7 p.m. the same day, a sequence of Bible readings with Christmas carols and prayers; 3) the Family Christmas Service on 25 December with the celebration of Holy Communion.

"I Kiss Your Hands!"

Dear Aunties and Uncles Overseas:

If only you would have seen yesterday our joy when your parcel arrived with its rich contents. We could not enough admire the wonderful clothes, one more beautiful than the other, as they came forth from the parcel. We pray, God recompense your goodness through His rich blessings.

Your gifts meant a very great help for us. My father is a country pastor with small income and I am the only really healthy in the family. Both Mummy and Daddy are in poor health, and my sister Ildiko is hydrocephalic and epileptic. She is now 17 years old. Grandmother who lives with us is blind. I have finished my eight years of general schooling and am now in a grammar school. I am 15 years old. I have also two elder brothers, but they are no more at home.

I kiss your hands,

Jacky

"I kiss your hands"

is what little Hungarian children write when they want to say 'Thank you'. Extracts from other letters show how the Lord Jesus uses your gifts to bring relief and happiness into Lutheran homes in Hungary. May these thankful voices add joy to your Christmas!

Surgeons gave up hope

"Before I try to find the right words to express my thanks for your parcel, let me tell that the surgeons had given up hope to save the life of my little son. After three successive operations, he got a general sepsis. Kidneys and digestion ceased to function. Yet he recovered. We Christians know and witness faithfully that it was God who answered the prayers said during the critical night, and gave us back our son.

"The vitamins, special milk powder, Ovaltine which you sent without knowing of the sudden illness of my son came on the very day of recovery, therefore at the best possible time to strengthen his weak body.

"Our Lord, when He healed the nine lepers, experienced the ungratefulness of eight of them. We would not like to be like those eight of the nine, but you are so far away, and we do not know you. Therefore we can only send by this letter our deep gratitude and thanks and fall on our knees to glorify Him, who by His Holy Spirit has induced you to come to our help."

A LAYMAN

2

Chosen to be an Elder

"I acknowledge respectfully the receipt of your valuable gift parcel which arrived without anything missing in it.

"The beautiful woollen winter coat fits as if I had let it made on measure, and the same is the case with the shoes and shirts. But it is the winter coat which I enjoyed the most because it solved my greatest problem worrying me for a considerable time. I cannot be grateful enough for it.

"Last Sunday I had another happy and honouring event. I have been chosen by the congregation to

be an Elder.

"It is difficult to find the right words to express my thanks. I can never forget your help and care. I pray daily for you. This is the only way to show God how deeply I am grateful."

THE FAMILY OF A LUTHERAN PASTOR

3

Cycle or walk 20-25 miles on a Sunday

"We thank you gratefully for the valuable parcel we have received yesterday. We are all happy by this gift of God which came through your charity. May our Lord reward you bountifully.

"We came here to this small village parish three years ago. There are 220 souls to care for, scattered in three diaspora congregations. Of course, they are not able to provide fully for our upkeep, so we have to cultivate some land and have a small life-stock to live on. It is hard work for us, but still harder is the service of my husband who has to ride on bicycle or walk 20-25 miles on a Sunday round the diaspora to hold his Sunday services. But it is happy work, too, for it is the highest and most worthwhile service a man can undertake."

A LAYWOMAN

4

Once in better circumstances

"I received with grateful thanks your gift parcel. I cannot describe my joy and that of the children. Each piece fitted as if it would have been made especially for us. God be thank and glory that there are sacrificing, charitable souls like you and that you thought just of us. We, too, once lived in better circumstances, but I can witness when they turned to want and struggle, God has never forsaken us and I trust He will not. A sign of it is your dear care for us.

"Again, many, many deeply felt thanks."

AN AGED COUPLE

5

In this selfish rushing world - charity

"It is so good to experience in this selfish, rushing world that brotherly charity did not disappear in it, but manifests itself, and indeed in such a touching way, as the sign of your love towards us who are strangers and far away.

"Only through your goodness could we receive the needed medicines. I am 81 years old, my wife 75. I have been for 36 years teacher, later headmaster. Now I suffer of arterio sclerosis, my wife struggles with very high blood pressure. We both needed the medicines but we could not receive it. Thank God and you, we have them now."

A FIVE-YEAR OLD

6

100 kisses

"I, too, can write. Also I thank you for all. When I shall go to school, my writing will be nicer. 100 kisses."

A GRANDMOTHER

7

Thought of me, an old grandma

"May God bless you richly, dear brethren, that you have thought of me, an old grandma. Oh, how wonderful feeling it is to wear the warm winter coat, woollen shawl, nice clothes."

A MOTHER OF SEVEN CHILDREN

8

The Holy Spirit must have guided you

"Those clothing pieces which came out of the parcel were the most needed by each one of us. The Holy Spirit must have guided you that you were able to choose exactly the pieces for which we longed. The overcoats, pullovers, dresses, bedsheets, blankets, socks - all, all were so wonderful."

SUNDERLAND New membership class of seven: two came through recent film series, one through the Lutheran Hour - and he brought three others with him ... since resumption of evening services in November, church attendance up to average 45 from previous 25 ... "Family Night", 22 November, presented by St. Timothys Ladies' Guild, enjoyed immensely by 60 ... programme included recitations, piano solos, songs, two one-act plays, pastor's message and a menu of hotdogs, cakes, and tea ... Luther League, formed 28 November with six members, will carol old folks on 19 December ... Children's Christmas Eve service will use film strip "Blessings of the Christ Child".

CARDIFF Older boys and girls of youth club will go carolling with Mr. and Mrs. Jonathan Cremer carrying with them a donation box for "Bringing Christ to the Nations" ... the first Lutheran Children's Christmas service on Sunday, 21 December, with filmstrip "Emmanuel" ... Architect submits further sketches for church building to Executive Council.

GRINDON "Parents' Night", 29 November, attracted 150 ... November attendances: church - 49, 57, 52, 75, 52; Sunday School - 108, 125, 130, 103, 98 ... total participation in CEF planned, each member to be offered CEF Savings Stamps each week ... eleven women attend Grindon's first Ladies Guild meeting ... instruction classes slow in forming ... new Bible Class of seventeen brings particular joy to Pastor Jose ... three youth clubs "settling in" ... special Christmas programmes: 1) an original nativity play with children miming while "Grandpa" narrates on Sunday before Christmas, 2) Children's carol service on Christmas Eve, 3) pageant and carol service on Sunday after Christmas ... Advent Wreath and tree, donated by Lord Lambton Estate, beautify hall.

"She brought forth her firstborn Son."

"Behold, how simply these things happen on earth, and yet they are so highly esteemed in heaven. On earth it happens thus: there is a poor young wife, Mary, at Nazareth, thought nothing of and regarded as one of the lowliest women in the town. No one is aware of the great wonder that she bears. And she herself keeps silent, does not pride herself, and thinks she is the lowliest woman in the town. She goes up with Joseph, her master. They have probably neither man-servant nor maid-servant, but he is master and servant, and she is mistress and maid. Perhaps they left their homestead to look after itself, or they may have given it into a neighbour's care.

"As they are thus drawing nigh to Bethlehem, the Evangelist presents them to us as the most wretched and disdained of all the pilgrims, being forced to give way to everyone, till at last they are turned out into a stable, and made to share shelter, table, and bedchamber with the beasts, while many a wicked man sits in the inn above and is treated like a lord. Not a soul notices and knows what God is doing in that stable. He leaves empty the manors and stately chambers, and leaves the people to their eating and drinking and their good cheer, But this comfort and great treasure remains hidden from them

"Oh, what a thick, black darkness was over Bethlehem then that she failed to apprehend so great a light! How truly God shows that He has no regard for the world and its ways!"



(From Dr. Luther's Christmas Sermon 1522)

LADIES DISPATCH 18,000 "LUTHERAN HOUR NEWS"

Twenty women from ELCE congregations at Kentish Town, Tottenham, Petts Wood, and Boreham Wood met at the Lutheran offices at 42, Museum Street, to collate, fold, and dispatch 18,000 copies of the quarterly "Lutheran Hour News" to supporters of the radio programme all over the United Kingdom. A larger turnout of ladies would have reduced a job which, as it was, took three days to complete.

FURLOUGH ARRANGEMENTS FINALIZED

A memorandum advising final arrangements for the furlough plan adopted by the 1958 Synod has been issued recently to all ELCE congregations. After tabling the matter in 1957, the Synod adopted the Furlough Resolution in 1958 and instructed the Executive Council to put the resolution into effect. The new complete ELCE Furlough Plan is open to every congregation, mission, or board of the church, provides a 3-month furlough (including travel) every seven years, each participating congregation, mission or board, contributing £100 per year into a central fund. Furlough travel costs and arrangements will be handled by the central Furlough Committee.

At the same meeting on 2 December, the Executive Council considered 1959 budgets from St. Andrews, London, and St. Timothy's, Sunderland. Further discussion was given to the calling of a pastor to Harlow New Town. This will probably take place in the January meeting. The Council also considered asking an experienced church architect to serve as architectural consultant to the Council.

£250 CEF DONATION FROM HOLY TRINITY MEMBER

The Church Extension Fund received recently a gift of £250 from a member of Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, Tottenham. The CEF Financial Secretary states that another £9000 is needed to reach the 1958 goal.

AFRICAN DISTRIBUTION FOR LUTHERAN FILMS

The East African Religious Films Library of Kenya has recently been appointed agent for Lutheran Film Service, according to Mr. Eric Smith, manager. Distribution facilities had already been arranged in Southern Rhodesia. Mr. Smith also reported a recent film sale to the Lebanon.

FILM SERVICE MAKES PRESENTATION TO LORD RANK

At the seventieth birthday celebrations of Lord Rank J.P., film and flour magnate, at 6 Eaton Gate, Westminster, on Monday, 22 December, Mr. Eric Smith will make a presentation of a plaque of John Wesley, the founder of Methodism. Lord Rank, pioneer of religious film-making in this country, is a prominent Methodist layman.

RUISLIP DISCUSSES CHURCH WITH ARCHITECT

The Building Committee of St. Andrews Lutheran Church of South Ruislip had their first official meeting with an architect on Monday, 8 December, at the home of Mr. G. Humphreys, St. Andrews' President. Present also was the Rev. E. Geo. Pearce of the Executive Council. Contemplated for the quarter-acre site at Queen's Walk and Whitby Road is a dual-purpose church which will cost £15-18,000.

35 LADIES BRAVE FOG TO MEET AT KENTISH TOWN

Lutheran women from scattered parts of London made their way across the fog-bound Metropolis to meet at Luther-Iyndale Hall on Tuesday, 2 December. One group from Christ Church, Petts Wood, twenty-five miles away, had to cancel their trip and the coach they had chartered. Another group of six, travelling by car from St. Andrews, South Ruislip, were lost several times and finally took almost three hours to make the 12-mile return journey.

The occasion was the Ladies' Guild Christmas party to which members from all London ladies' groups were invited.

£12000

£10000

£ 8000

£ 6000

£ 4000

£ 2000



CHURCH EXTENSION FUND

LOANS AND DONATIONS
(Receipts to 30 November)

	<u>L o a n s</u>		<u>Donations</u>
	<u>Nov.</u>	<u>Total</u>	
KENTISH TOWN	£311	£853	£198
TOTTENHAM	14	291	1
RUISLIP	25	372	4
SUNDERLAND	2	43	6
BROMLEY	0	25	0
BOREHAM WOOD	0	0	0
PETTS WOOD	0	103	53
GRINDON	5	5	0
OTHERS	0	0	584
Totals		£1692	£ 846
Grand Total			£2538

WE ARE STILL £9462 SHORT OF THE £12,000 GOAL

An elderly woman in far-off Australia, reading the special CEF insert in the October British Lutheran, wrote: "I felt I just had to help" and sent a gift of £25 for the CEF.

Do YOU want to help? HAVE you? WILL you? FOR HIM?

INVEST IN THE CHURCH EXTENSION FUND THIS CHRISTMAS

Share the JOY of Christmas
PEACE

LET THE SAVINGS OF CHRIST'S PEOPLE WORK FOR CHRIST



From 6th Century Ivory Book Cover.

For unto you is born
this day, in the city
of David, a Saviour,
which is Christ the Lord.

St. Luke 2.11

THE BRITISH LUTHERAN

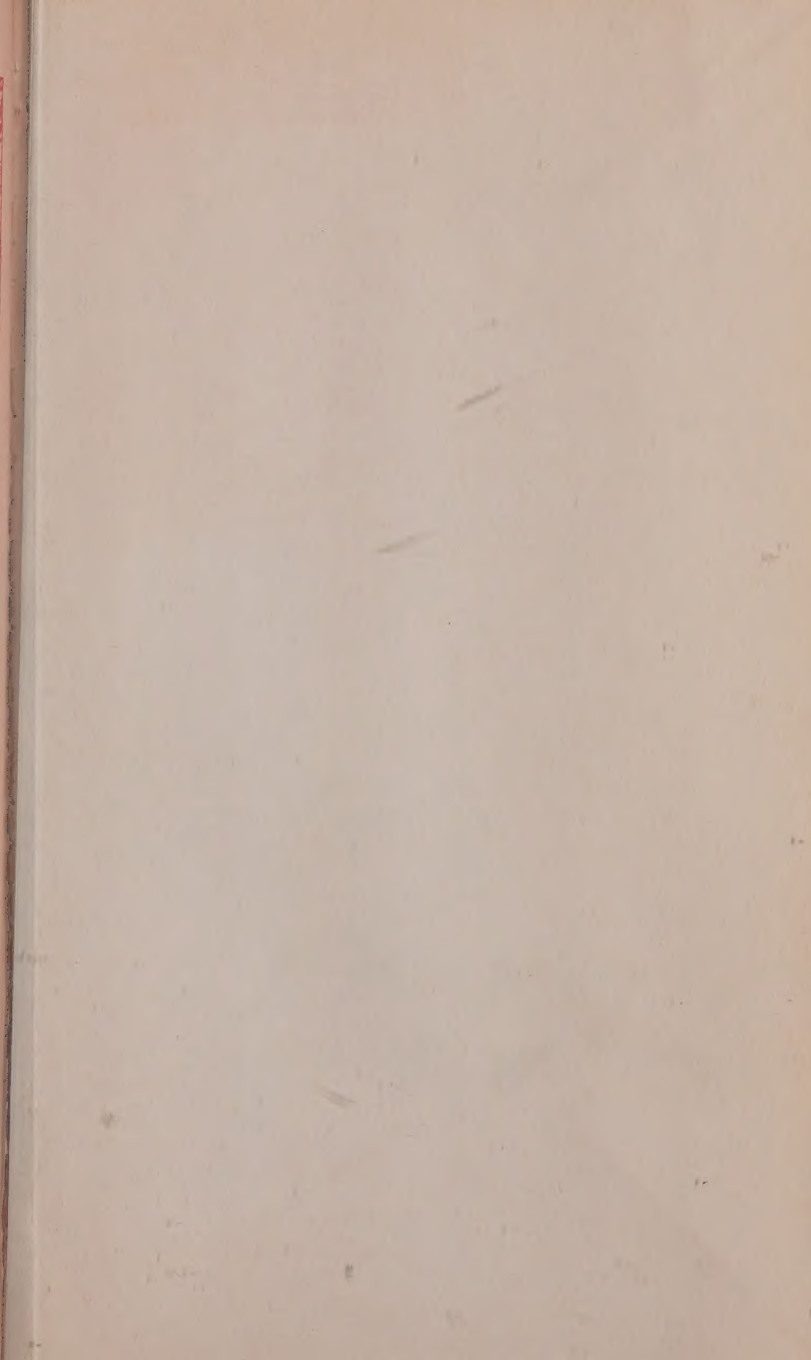
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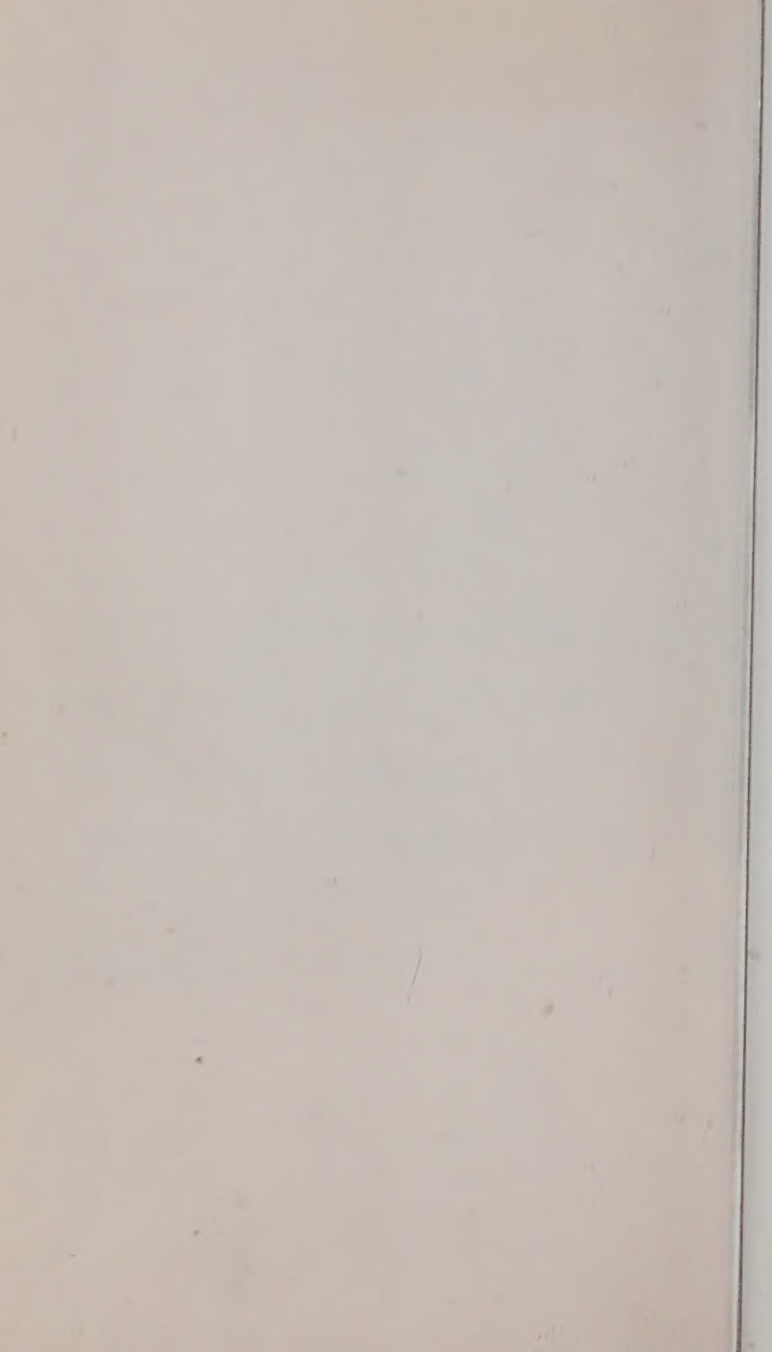
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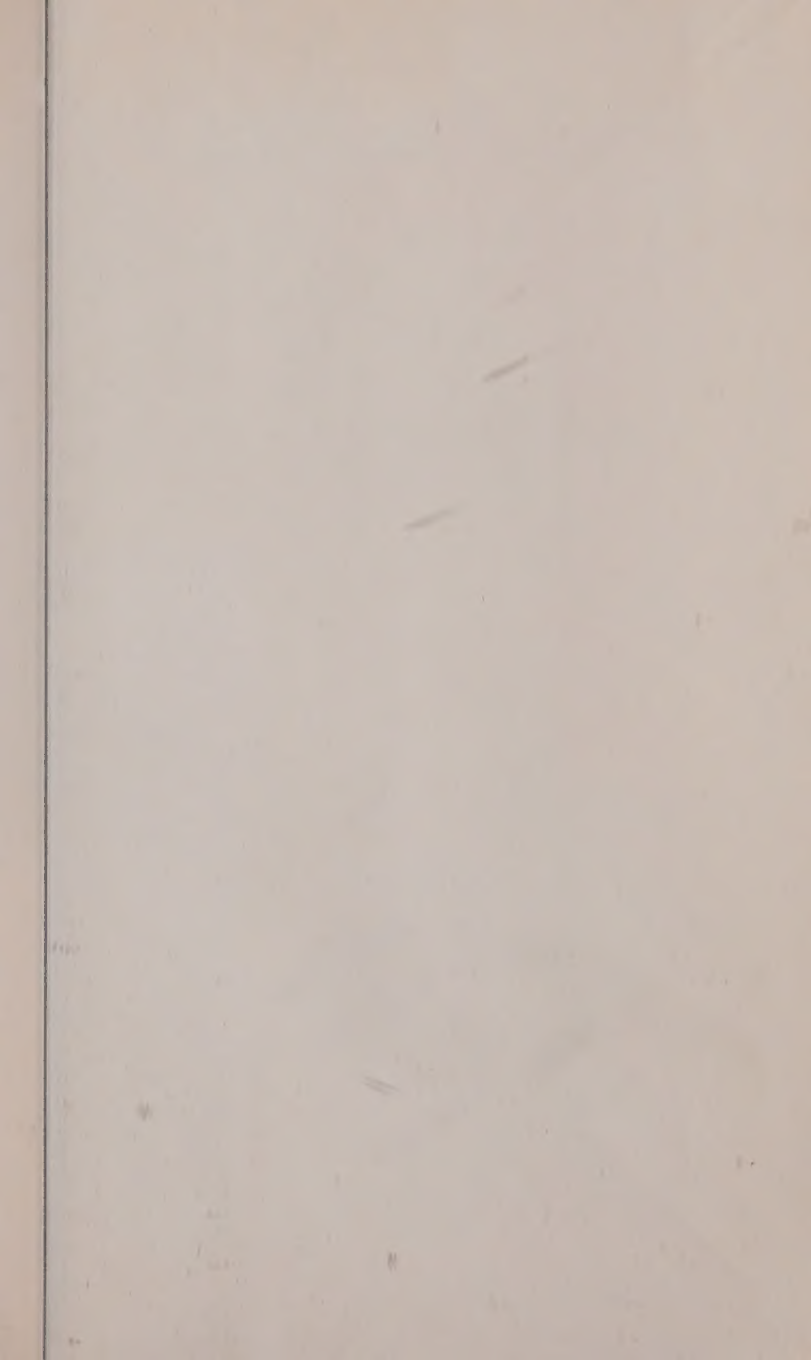
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